

**SUMMARY OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
MAY 20, 2003**

The Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB) met May 20, 2003, at 11 a.m. by teleconference. Chairperson Ms. Zonetta English of the Louisville/Jefferson County MSD led the meeting. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. The meeting agenda, prepared and distributed prior to the meeting by the chair, is given in Attachment C.

INTRODUCTION

The meeting was opened by ELAB's Designated Federal Officer (DFO), Ms. Lara Autry of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Following a roll call to ensure that a quorum of ELAB members was present on the call, Ms. English led a review of minutes from the May 14 meeting. The minutes were approved pending minor edits. Ms. English then moved to a review and status update of action items.

REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS

- **ELAB Budget and Charter:** Dr. Michael Green led discussion of comments he had received on the draft proposed budget distributed via email. He noted that he had received comments on the trip cost breakdown to increase costs relative to attending a National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) meeting. The rationale for the increase in cost was that ELAB's open forum and face-to-face meeting are often held several days apart at the NELAC meeting, resulting in increased lodging and meal costs for ELAB members attending both meetings. Dr. Green also noted that preparation time for meetings had been increased. There was minor discussion of the time commitment required of the DFO. Ms. Autry suggested that the quarter-time assumption used in the budget spreadsheet was an overestimation. She indicated that she would address the issue in her DFO training course. Dr. Green summarized the changes made to the proposed budget spreadsheet in response to comments he had received, including the open forum and face-to-face meeting as separate items: 1) an increase in lodging and meals, and 2) an increase in meeting preparation and participation time. There was also moderate discussion of ELAB's strategy for presenting the proposed budget request to EPA after completion. It was suggested that the budget should be accompanied by a narrative outlining ELAB's past accomplishments and future plans as a value-added demonstration of the support the private sector provides to EPA. Ms. English encouraged the members of ELAB and Ms. Autry to provide feedback in regard to next steps. After discussion of membership issues later in the meeting, it was decided that Dr. Green would draft the proposed budget as two scenarios - one with a full slate of 15 members as specified in ELAB's charter and one with a slate of ten members.

Ms. Autry had not received the draft charter language prepared by Dr. Mark Marcus prior to the meeting, so Ms. English submitted it to her during the teleconference via email. Ms. Autry

noted that she had sent the current charter to the members of ELAB for review and comment. Dr. Green noted that the current charter states that “EPA may pay travel and per diem expenses when determined necessary and appropriate.” He asked Ms. Autry to get clarification in her upcoming DFO training as to what constitutes “necessary and appropriate” expenses. Ms. Autry agreed to seek this clarification. She also noted her intent to talk to EPA’s attorneys regarding how ELAB will interact with the standards adoption and standards development groups under the NELAC reorganization. She indicated that she did not expect ELAB’s charter to change significantly. Further discussion of the charter was tabled until the next meeting to allow all parties additional time to review the current charter and the document from Dr. Marcus.

- **Workproducts From Mr. Jerry Parr:** Ms. English noted that she had not yet received information from Mr. Robert Wyeth in regard to Mr. Parr’s list of outstanding ELAB initiatives. Since Mr. Wyeth was not present on the call, the issue was tabled for discussion at a future date.
- **Language for Recommendation of EPA Endorsement of NELAC:** Ms. English noted that she had not yet received information from Mr. Wyeth in regard to the status of the September 2002 letter to EPA from ECOS and had been unable to locate her copy of the letter. Since Mr. Wyeth was not present on the call, this issue was also tabled for discussion at a future date.
- **Update on Analyte/Analyte Group:** Ms. English noted that she had heard from Mr. Wyeth that he was still awaiting comments from the workgroup.
- **Update on White Paper on Restructured NELAC:** Although Dr. Marcus was not present on the call, there was moderate discussion of the perceived intent of the draft white paper he had distributed electronically prior to the meeting. Members of ELAB questioned whether the purpose of the white paper was to suggest that ELAB recommend that the Institute for National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation (INELA) adopt the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) approach to the development of standards for regulatory usage. This led to discussion of the content and format of ELAB recommendations to EPA. Dr. Green requested that Ms. English circulate some previous ELAB recommendations so that newer members could see the format. Further discussion of the white paper was tabled until the next teleconference so that Dr. Marcus could be present for the discussion about the paper’s intent. Ms. English asked ELAB to review the list of previous draft recommendations for discussion at the next teleconference.
- **Draft Letter to EPA Regarding Program:** Ms. English directed participants’ attention to a draft letter from ELAB to EPA that had been distributed prior to the teleconference. She indicated that the letter, drafted in January 2003, addressed an old action item arising from an open forum issue. Further discussion of the letter was tabled to allow all parties additional time to review the letter.
- **Homeland Security** - Dr. Green noted that he had distributed American Chemical Council

(ACC) information on chemical facility security to the other members of ELAB for review and comment. He noted that this material is in management system format and is an example of something the chemical industry has developed to address security related to chemical facilities and the movement of hazardous chemicals. Dr. Green raised the question of what NELAC has done to address the issue of security, especially as it relates to chemical inventory (i.e. the control of chemical agents that could be used as weapons of mass destruction) and assuring that laboratories have determined critical analyses (i.e. analyses associated with drinking water supplies). After minor discussion, the issue was tabled for continued consideration and inclusion on future meeting agendas.

- **Vacancies on ELAB:** There was a brief discussion of vacancies on ELAB. Dr. Green reminded Ms. English that at least one additional individual had expressed interest in ELAB membership. Ms. English indicated that she would send the appropriate information to Ms. Autry. Ms. Autry informed those present on the call that she had received a response from EPA's Office of General Counsel (OGC) regarding membership issues. OGC indicated that it will not be necessary for ELAB to fill vacant slots before the July rechartering because there is not enough time to do it properly. Noting that ELAB's charter is for 15 members, Ms. Autry also informed those present on the call that OGC had recommended several courses of action to increase ELAB membership. These courses of action include writing a Federal Register Notice (FRN) to seek nominations, making an announcement at the upcoming Ninth NELAC Annual Meeting (NELAC 9) to solicit nominations, and soliciting nominations from the current members of ELAB. Dr. Green asked Ms. Autry to provide a list of focal groups from which ELAB should solicit members. She noted that member composition was outlined in the charter that she had distributed prior to the meeting. She also noted that the two groups that had been highlighted to her by OGC were an environmental public interest group and a laboratory assessment body.
- **Meeting Schedule for 2003-2004:** Ms. English noted that she had distributed a questionnaire to solicit input on scheduling future teleconferences. She reminded those present on the call to complete the questionnaire and return it to her so that she could provide Ms. Autry with the necessary information.

AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

Ms. English reviewed items to be included on ELAB's agenda for the next teleconference. The agenda will include a follow-up with Mr. Wyeth in regard to Mr. Parr's list of outstanding ELAB initiatives, a follow-up with Dr. Marcus in regard to his white paper, a discussion of comments on the ELAB charter, and discussion of ELAB's agenda and focus for NELAC 9 in San Diego.

CONCLUSION

Ms. English thanked the members of ELAB for their participation. There being no further business to discuss, she turned the meeting over to Ms. Autry. Ms. Autry reminded those present on the call that they should be prepared to finalize ELAB's NELAC 9 agenda at the next meeting to allow her

sufficient time to prepare meeting packets for NELAC 9. She also reminded those present on the call that they should be prepared to make final changes to the ELAB charter at that time because she would be submitting final recharter paperwork before leaving for NELAC 9. Ms. Autry adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:05 p.m. EDT. The next meeting of ELAB is scheduled as a teleconference on Wednesday, May 28, 2003, at 11 a.m., EDT.

**ACTION ITEMS
ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY ADVISORY BOARD
MAY 20, 2003**

Item No.	Action	Date to be Completed or Status Report Given
1	Dr. Green will update proposed ELAB budget spreadsheet to reflect comments received to date and to provide two membership scenarios.	05/28/03
2	Ms. Autry will seek clarification of ELAB charter at DFO training re: time commitment required of DFO and “necessary and appropriate” travel and per diem expenses and report to ELAB.	05/28/03
3	Ms. Autry will talk to EPA attorneys re: ELAB’s interaction with standards adoption and standards development groups under restructured NELAC.	05/28/03
4	Ms. English will distribute or arrange to have distributed previous ELAB recommendations so that newer members can view structure and format.	05/28/03
5	ELAB will review previous draft recommendations for further discussion to determine whether they are still appropriate for submission to EPA.	05/28/03
6	ELAB will include tabled issues (work products from Mr. Parr, ECOS letter, Analyte/Analyte Group, white paper on consensus standards, homeland security issues, etc.) on agenda for future discussion	
7	Ms. English will forward any ELAB membership applications she has received to Ms. Autry.	05/28/03
8	ELAB will finalize agenda for NELAC 9.	05/28/03
9	ELAB will finalize charter.	05/28/03
10	ELAB will include homeland security on meeting agenda for NELAC 9 in San Diego.	06/02/03

**PARTICIPANTS
ELAB MEETING
MAY 20, 2003**

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**ELAB Meeting Agenda-May 20, 2003
11:00-1:00 PM EDT**

1. Review Minutes from May 14, 2003 ELAB Meeting-All (10 minutes)
2. Action Items from May 14, 2003 Conference Call-ALL (60 minutes)
 - ELAB Budget (Feedback) Dr. Green/Z. English
 - ELAB Charter-All
 - Work Products from Jerry Parr-Robert Wyeth
 - ECOS Letter-Has it been found? (ZE/Bob Wyeth)
 - Update Analyte/Analyte Group-Bob Wyeth
 - Open Forum Issue-Dr. Marcus (ZE)
 - Homeland Security Information-ALL
3. New Business –ALL (20 Minutes)
4. Agenda Items for next Meeting - (5 minutes)